

[p. 9-B]

178 relative importance of characters, rather than
 538 plot, is the reflection of social organization
 in the myths which makes Eagle the chief, Dove
 his messenger, and Coyote and Cougar influential
 people.⁹ In Newman's text material all these
 persons are referred to as "the great ones." But
 again, while holding the characters in place,
 this factor would not prevent the addition of
 many minor actors were such elaboration desired.

538 It is conceivable that the constant retelling
 of certain very popular tales is another phase of
 the Yokuts trend toward simplicity and restraint:
 novelty and variety were not sought. Our col-
 lection is not sufficiently exhaustive to prove
 this point.

In the native texts there is no tendency to be
 explicit in referring to characters or to cul-
 tural features. If an episode has to do with
 several characters, the speaker or actor in each
 instance is not always named. The listener is
 expected to know who is talking or acting, for it
 is apparently assumed that he is already familiar
 with the details of the story. (We have no check
 on the possibility of a greater specificity in
 the case of a new story being related to an un-
 familiar audience.) Nor are there individual
 speech styles to identify certain characters.

171 The number of cultural features appearing in
 538 the myths are few as compared with Basin tales;
 wherein many material objects are mentioned, or
 with Pomo myths which recount Coyote's creations
 and institutions. In Yokuts and Western Mono
 myths are items or incidents which may be under-
 stood through the culture, but are not always
 self-evident. The most important of these is the
 social pattern, Eagle as chief, Dove and Road
 Runner as messengers, Owl as doctor. A little
 episode describing an assembly called by Eagle
 to decide upon a seed-gathering expedition in-
 troduces two tales (p. 1; abstract 114); and
 Eagle's judiciary rôle also appears in Condor
 [756] Steals Falcon's Wife (p. 2). Shamans' mercenary
 practices are exposed (abstracts 89, 93, 108,
 109), and the slamming of their trays upon the
 ground (abstract 108) is their usual method of
 "shooting power." The power of jumping great
 distances, a shaman's ability, is directly men-
 tioned in a Western Mono myth (tale 40), and is
 inferential in several others (tales 3, 4, 16).
 [785] Fasting or observing a meat taboo is mentioned
 262 in various tales, especially in one referring to
 the Jimson-weed ritual (abstract 131). Ceremoni-
 [796] als such as the annual mourning ceremony, shamans'
 contest, snake dance, and bear dance are not men-
 tioned, although one obscure reference is made to
 the feather ornaments worn by bear dancers (tale
 14). Falcon's ill-luck at gambling (abstracts
 90, 91, 93) is not due to the fact that his wife

⁹The integration of mythical and actual social
 forms is discussed in Gayton, Yokuts-Mono Chiefs
 and Shamans, pp. 369-371.